

## CITING SOCIAL MEDIA AS A NEWS SOURCE IN MAINSTREAM

### MEDIA: AN ANALYSIS OF INDIAN NEWSPAPERS

NIKY KUMARI

*Research Scholar, Department of Mass Communication, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India*

#### ABSTRACT

*Social media is being heavily used by mainstream media in news production. A trend is being seen by newspapers to cite the social media sources while writing the news stories. The existing literature suggests that social media is being embraced as a news source by mainstream media. This study aims to examine how Indian newspapers are citing social media sources in their news stories. Also, this explores the variety of news being sourced by social media and their geographic focus in newspapers' coverage. Thus, this study gives a first insight into Indian newspapers' sourcing practices with social media in writing news stories. A content analysis of two national newspapers, The Times of India and The Hindu, has done to analyze a sample of news stories which have explicitly mentioned the social media source. News stories are coded to draw inferences. The study reveals that mainstream media is getting most of its news sources from Twitter and also they are not hesitating to use them as a 'primary' and 'standalone' sources. An important thing noticed during the data collection is that mainstream media is citing only those social media sources which are verified accounts.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Social Media, Mainstream Media, Indian Newspapers, News Source & News Production*

**Received:** Mar 12, 2019; **Accepted:** Apr 02, 2019; **Published:** Apr 16, 2019; **Paper Id.:** IJCMSJUN20194

#### INTRODUCTION

Social media has become an essential tool for mainstream media in their news production process; from accessing news to the promoting news social media provides a comfortable platform to journalists. Within a decade, every media organization has made its presence on social media to exploit the unlimited audience reach beyond of geographic boundaries. The charm of social media is its user generated contents which attracts the media houses for finding leads of stories. The social media is also attracting the prominent people of the society, politicians, celebrities, governments and other newsmakers by providing them a vast audience group to interact with. Due to the presence of those prominent personalities and other newsmakers on social media, media organizations wander around their social media accounts to sniff the news. Mainstream media are not only accessing news from social media sources but also citing those sources in writing the news stories. In recent years, this has become an increasing trend in Indian mainstream media; so it becomes necessary to find out the reasons behind this trend. This research study keeps its focus on how citation of social media sources in news stories takes place in Indian newspapers.

#### OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to analyse the contents of Indian mainstream newspapers to find how Indian newspapers are collecting informations from social media and then citing them as a source of the story. Also, to find out the

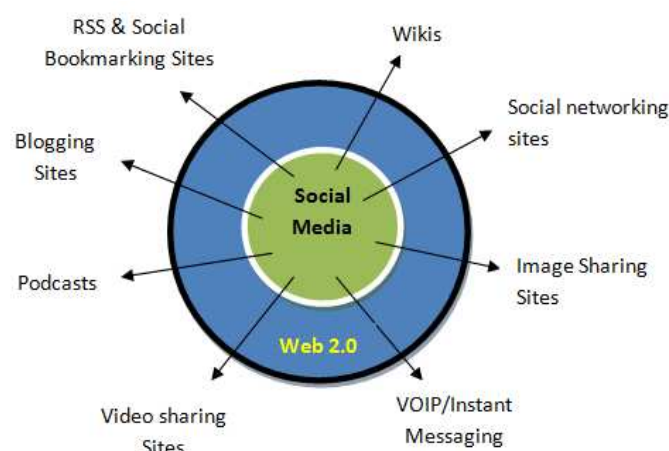
pattern of citing social media sources in writing stories. The objectives of this study can be listed as:

- To find out which social media platforms are mostly cited by Indian newspapers.
- To identify the citation pattern of social media sources by Indian newspapers.
- To discuss the topics of stories preferred by newspapers to cite social media sources.
- To identify the primary newsmakers of the social media sphere.
- To analyse the reason behind citing social media sources in newspapers.

### Rise of Social Media as a News Platform

The development of Web 2.0 and the growth of social media can't be seen separated; the beginning of both can be considered simultaneously and supplementary to each-other. The web 2.0 has revolutionised the global information system accessed through internet. It's the only Web 2.0 which accelerated the growth of Web as a news platform. Web 2.0 provided an interface to the people to spread their content around the world rather than just sitting at the receiving end. Note the year 2004 when Tim O'Reilly held the first web 2.0 conference; in the same year Mark Zuckerberg launched a Social networking site 'Facebook'. Just after it YouTube was launched in 2005 and Twitter was launched in 2006. Various other platforms available on World Wide Web, whether its blog, Podcasts, Social networking sites, micro-blogging sites, wikis and etc., users can write, share or comment. It can be said that Web 2.0 is a 'Social web' (Rheingold, 2000)<sup>1</sup> where people do social collaboration and engagement to each-other.

The interactive nature of the Web 2.0 attracted the media organizations and then they began to launch their digital editions. 'The Hindu' is the first among Indian newspapers to launch its digital edition in 1995. In the earlier stages (1995-2006), what they meant by digital newspaper? – It was only converting print copy into web copy i.e. e-paper. That time, TV news channels used to broadcast the recorded programmes on the web. But few years later, practices of digital operations changed drastically. Media organizations constructed their digital teams to cope with the changing digital scenario. Digital teams now have their own space in the newsrooms to produce content for web edition; they are breaking news on the web. Even the contents of web edition are being utilized by their subsidiary print or broadcast edition. Very soon media organizations made their presence on social media after seeing the millions of users on various social media platforms. The relation between the Web 2.0 and social media can be understood by the Figure-1.



**Figure 1: Web 2.0 and Social Media**

The next six years (2007-2012) was the truly transition period for media organizations. This was the time when media organizations were engaged in creating their Facebook pages, twitter handles and YouTube Channels to exploit the facilities of social media (see the Table-1). The leading media houses started to appoint specialized journalists to cope with new challenges. The New York Times hired its first social media editor in early 2009 and at the same time, Sky News in the UK appointed a Twitter correspondent to cover breaking news; BBC also appointed its first social media editor in late 2009 (Alejandro, 2010)<sup>2</sup>.

Here is the list of the some reputed media organizations and the date of their social media handles created which helps to understand the rise of social media as a news platform within a decade.

**Table 1: Mainstream Media's Presence on Social Media**

Name of Media Organizations	Facebook Page Created	Twitter Handle Created	Followers on Facebook	Followers on Twitter
CNN	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov. 2007	9 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2007	30 M	40 M
BBC News (UK)	24 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2009	8 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 2007	47 M	9.39 M
The Guardian	26 <sup>th</sup> Nov. 2007	6 <sup>th</sup> Nov. 2009	7.7 M	7.18 M
The New York Times	30 <sup>th</sup> Oct. 2007	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2007	15 M	41.6 M
The Washington Post	7 Nov. 2007	27 <sup>th</sup> March 2007	6 M	12.6 M
AajTak	25 <sup>th</sup> Sep. 2008	26 <sup>th</sup> May 2009	21 M	7.41 M
ABP News Hindi	26 <sup>th</sup> Aug. 2010	12 <sup>th</sup> July 2011	17.6 M	1.07 M
Zee News Hindi	27 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 2012	12 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 2012	10 M	1.58 M
BBC News Hindi	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2011	13 <sup>th</sup> Sep. 2011	6.5 M	1 M
Dainik Jagran	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2009	11 <sup>th</sup> Aug. 2009	13.6 M	0.5 M
Dainik Bhaskar	15 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 2010	20 <sup>th</sup> Aug. 2009	14 M	0.5 M
Times of India	26 <sup>th</sup> June 2008	19 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	10.6 M	11.2 M
Hindustan Times	5 <sup>th</sup> Aug. 2009	29 <sup>th</sup> April 2009	5.8 M	6.43 M
Indian Express	26 <sup>th</sup> Oct. 2009	8 <sup>th</sup> May 2009	7.1 M	2.85 M
The Hindu	22 <sup>nd</sup> Oct. 2011	13 <sup>th</sup> Feb. 2009	5.2 M	4.86 M
CNN News 18	22 <sup>nd</sup> Aug. 2008	2 <sup>nd</sup> June 2007	6 M	4 M
Zee News English	8 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2009	12 <sup>th</sup> Dec. 2008	8.9 M	4.02 M
NDTV	19 <sup>th</sup> June 2008	2 <sup>nd</sup> May 2009	2.3 M	10.8 M
Times Now	20 <sup>th</sup> June 2009	20 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 2011	5.4 M	8.56 M

**Note** – Social media data (verified accounts only) last collected on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2018. 'M' denotes the followers' numbers in millions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Social Media as a Source of News for Mainstream Media

In an enlarged study of the use of social media as news sources in print media, Broersma and Graham (2013)<sup>3</sup> found, "*journalism and social media have entered a convenient marriage; using social media to distribute news, market upcoming stories, and find and approach sources*". Dowdell-Baker (2013)<sup>4</sup> examined the use of social media as a news source in coverage of crisis events; his study presented that social media texts are an accepted news source for traditional media outlets.

Paulussen and Harder (2014)<sup>5</sup> analysed the two Flemish newspapers' articles with the reference of Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Their findings suggests that monitoring social media platforms has become a daily newsgathering routines of print media journalists; however they concede that social media are far from becoming a major news source even now.

Hladík and Štětka (2015)<sup>6</sup> also examined the powers of tweet as a news source; the result concludes that social media sources are used in small fraction of the overall news content but usually as secondary sources. They also assert that the social media are used by traditional media mainly for textual type of informations, except the tabloid press that prefers pictures available on social media. Lecheler and Kruikemeier (2016)<sup>7</sup> found in their review article, “*when it comes to sourcing, most journalists seem to have embraced online information searching, and they take social media as an important inspiration for developing news stories*”.

When discussing about the use of social media as a news source in Indian mainstream media, the two events flash in our mind: First, the Anti-corruption Movement in 2011 and second, Nirbhaya case in 2012. Rodrigues (2014)<sup>8</sup> study gives apprehension of how the use of social media platforms by the ‘India Against Corruption’ organisers and by the educated middle class influenced the mainstream media’s coverage of the ‘anti-corruption’ movement. Social media remain a niche element in news production during the Nirbhayarape case; journalists used social media for background information, beat reporting, and sources of information (Belair-Gagnon, Mishra, & Agur, 2014)<sup>9</sup>.

### Research Questions

- RQ1:** Which social media platform is mostly cited by Newspapers for sourcing the story?
- RQ2:** What is the citation pattern of social media sources in the newspapers?
- RQ3:** What are the topics of the stories preferred by newspapers to cite social media?
- RQ4:** Who are the primary newsmakers of the social media platforms?
- RQ5:** What is the reason behind use of social media sources by newspapers?
- RQ6:** What is the geographic focus of the news having social media source?

### Hypotheses

- H<sub>01</sub>:** Times of India and The Hindu do not significantly differ in their citation of social media as primary and secondary sources.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** Times of India and The Hindu do not significantly differ in their usage of social media as ‘standalone’ and ‘one among various’ sources.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** Times of India and The Hindu do not significantly differ in the citation of stories from social media verified accounts and unverified accounts.

## RESEARCH DESIGN & METHODOLOGY

A content Analysis method is adopted to analyse the news stories of two Indian newspapers. The Newspapers selected for the study are Times of India and The Hindu. The Times of India is the top-most English daily in India and The Hindu is the Second-most circulated English newspaper in India by circulation according to the Audit Bureau of Circulation (Jan-June, 2017)<sup>10</sup>. This study has selected two paradoxical English language newspapers to find out the pattern of the usage of social media sources.

The year 2017 has been deliberately selected for content analysis due to the assembly election in Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat in the month of February and December respectively. Further systematic sampling is applied to select 15 days from each of the month January to December. The sample is drawn so as to spread it uniformly across the whole years. The newspapers from first 15 days of the months – January, March, May, July, September and November are taken for the study while from 16<sup>th</sup> to the end of the months – February, April, June, August, October and December are taken for the study. The Table-2 is showing the sample copies for content analysis.

**Table 2: Total No. of Copies Analysed Month-Wise**

Months	No. of Copies Analysed	No. of Copies Analysed	Total No. of Copies Analysed
	(Times of India)	(The Hindu)	
January (1 <sup>st</sup> Jan.-15 <sup>th</sup> Jan.)	15	15	30
February (16 <sup>th</sup> Feb.-28 <sup>th</sup> Feb.)	13	13	26
March (1 <sup>st</sup> March-15 <sup>th</sup> March)	14	14	28
April (16 <sup>th</sup> April-30 <sup>th</sup> April)	15	15	30
May (1 <sup>st</sup> May-15 <sup>th</sup> May)	15	15	30
June (16 <sup>th</sup> June-30 <sup>th</sup> June)	15	15	30
July (1 <sup>st</sup> July-15 <sup>th</sup> July)	15	15	30
August (16 <sup>th</sup> Aug.-31 <sup>st</sup> Aug.)	15	15	30
September (1 <sup>st</sup> Sept.-15 <sup>th</sup> Sept.)	15	15	30
October (16 <sup>th</sup> Oct.-31 <sup>st</sup> Oct.)	15	15	30
November (1 <sup>st</sup> Nov.-15 <sup>th</sup> Nov.)	15	15	30
December (16 <sup>th</sup> Dec.-31 <sup>st</sup> Dec.)	16	16	32
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>356</b>

Total 178 copies from each of the newspapers are analysed; 3 copies from each of the newspapers are found missing as not printed on that day due to holidays. One copy from each of the newspaper is found missing on the dates - 14th March (due to the Holi festival), 16<sup>th</sup> August (due to the Independence Day holiday) and 20<sup>th</sup> October (due to Diwali festival).

Hence, the unit of content analysis is news story of the newspapers. Newspapers' stories are categorized into two categories – stories having social media as a news source and stories do not have social media source. Only those stories are used for further study which has explicitly mentioned social media as a news source. All social media platforms have been considered for studies which are referenced by both the newspapers during the mentioned time period.

## **DATA ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION**

Total 776 news stories are found from both the newspapers in which social media sources are cited in the story either by quoting or paraphrasing the statements. Out of 776 news stories, The Times of India has 380 news stories while The Hindu has 396 news stories in which social media are used as sources.

**Table 3: Total no of News Stories in Both the Newspapers**

Months	Times of India			The Hindu		
	Total No. of News Stories	No. of Stories from Social Media Sources	% of Total	Total No. of News Stories	No. of Stories from Social Media Sources	% of Total
January (1 <sup>st</sup> Jan.-15 <sup>th</sup> Jan.)	1540	34	2.21	1549	37	2.39
February (16 <sup>th</sup> Feb.-28 <sup>th</sup> Feb.)	1441	28	1.94	1462	32	2.19
March (1 <sup>st</sup> March-15 <sup>th</sup> March)	1560	35	2.24	1542	33	2.14
April (16 <sup>th</sup> April-30 <sup>th</sup> April)	1518	33	2.17	1502	29	1.93
May (1 <sup>st</sup> May-15 <sup>th</sup> May)	1486	33	2.22	1478	30	2.03
June (16 <sup>th</sup> June-30 <sup>th</sup> June)	1472	26	1.77	1506	32	2.12
July (1 <sup>st</sup> July-15 <sup>th</sup> July)	1558	36	2.31	1564	34	2.17
August (16 <sup>th</sup> Aug.-31 <sup>st</sup> Aug.)	1544	32	2.07	1550	33	2.13
September (1 <sup>st</sup> Sept.-15 <sup>th</sup> Sept.)	1462	27	1.85	1471	31	2.11
October (16 <sup>th</sup> Oct.-31 <sup>st</sup> Oct.)	1473	33	2.24	1478	36	2.44
November (1 <sup>st</sup> Nov.-15 <sup>th</sup> Nov.)	1542	34	2.20	1567	38	2.43
December (16 <sup>th</sup> Dec.-31 <sup>st</sup> Dec.)	1510	29	1.92	1536	31	2.02
<b>Total</b>	<b>18106</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>2.10</b>	<b>18205</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>2.18</b>

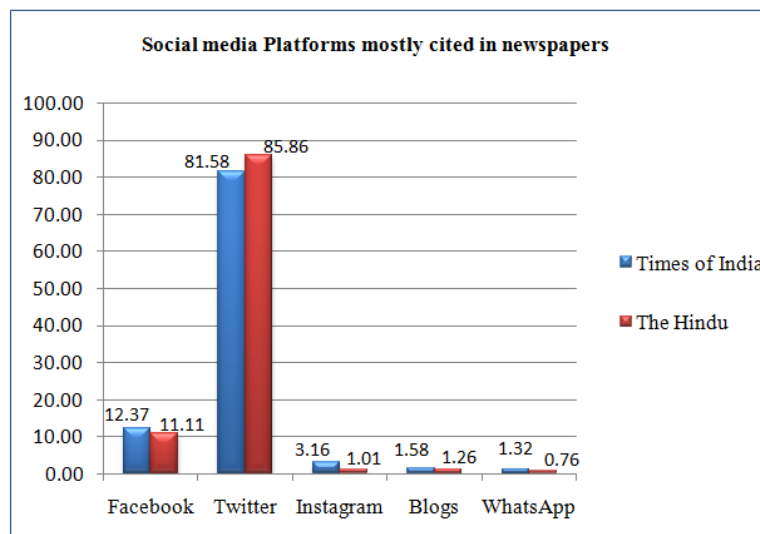
\*Only News stories are counted (Editorial, Articles and Features are excluded).

\* Story, continued on next page is counted as single news story.

From the above table, it can be seen that Times of India is using social media sources by 2.10% and The Hindu uses 2.18% of the total news stories. The difference of percentage doesn't look big among these two newspapers.

The first research question intended to know the most cited social media platform by Indian newspapers. All the widely used social media platforms have been considered that was cited in the newspapers' stories.

**Chart 1: Social Media Platforms Cited Mostly in Newspapers**

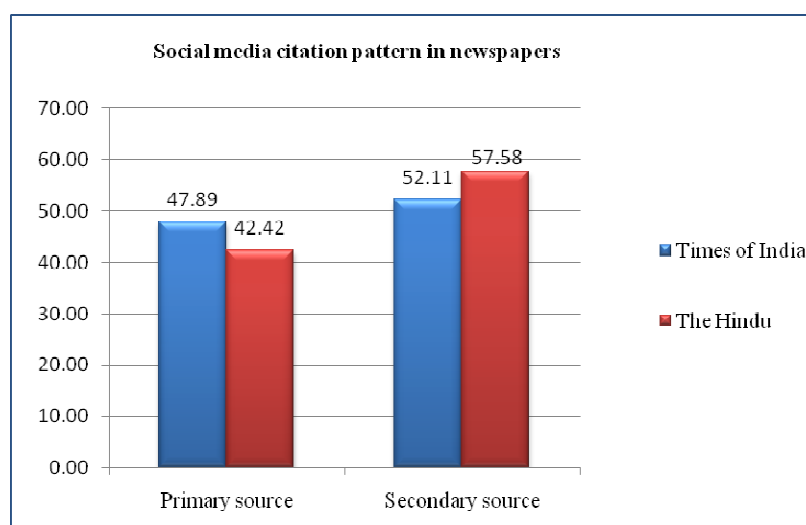


**Chart 1: Social Media Platforms Mostly Cited in Newspapers**

It's clear from the Chart -1 that Twitter dominates among all other social media services in both the newspapers. Newspapers are getting more information from Twitter rather than other social media sources (Answer of RQ1). As Broersma and Graham (2013)<sup>11</sup> found, “*Twitter has become a regularly used source for newspaper journalists*”, that's why Twitter is most cited social media source in newspapers as Chart-1 is showing. Other researchers Newman (2011)<sup>12</sup> and Hedman (2014)<sup>13</sup> also affirmed the normalization of Twitter in mainstream media.

**Chart 2: Social Media Citation Pattern in Newspapers**

For further study, the news stories are coded into two categories: ‘Primary source’ and ‘Secondary source’. News Stories which are using social media source as significant part of the news-story i.e. without that source the story can't be written; those news stories are considered under primary sourced stories. Secondary sourced news stories are using social media source just as a part of the story but that source is not so significant for writing that story. These codes are helpful in finding the citation pattern of social media sources in both the newspapers.

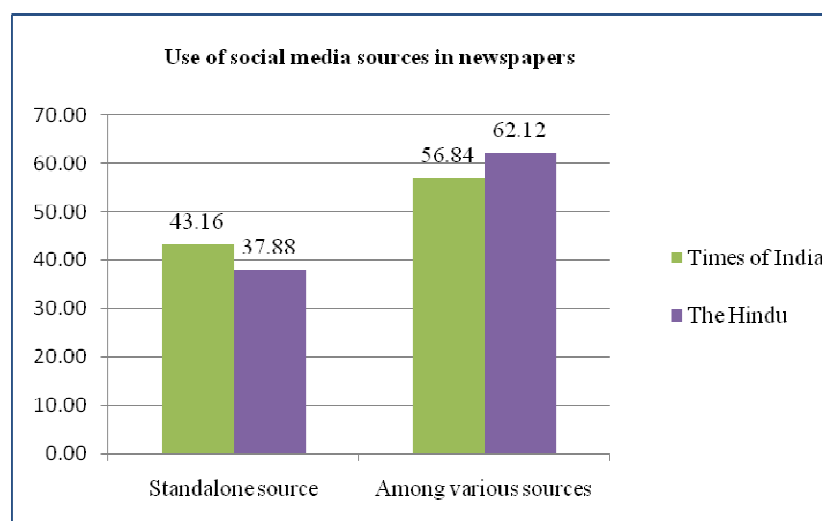


**Chart 2: Social Media Citation Pattern in Newspapers**

The Chart-2 is clearly showing that both newspapers are frequently using social media sources as primary and secondary sources. Both the newspapers are using social media sources more as secondary sources rather than primary sources as can be seen in the above chart. Comparing to the uses of primary sources, The Times of India is using social media sources as secondary sources by the difference of 5%, while The Hindu is using social media sources as secondary sources by the difference of 15%.

### Chart 3: Use of Social Media Sources in Newspapers

Two more codes are used – ‘standalone source’ and ‘among various sources’ to find out the usage of social media sources. The ‘standalone source’ code is used to identify only those articles which are using social media as only one source and no other sources are mentioned in that story whereas ‘among various sources’ code is used to identify those articles which are using social media sources with various other sources in the story.



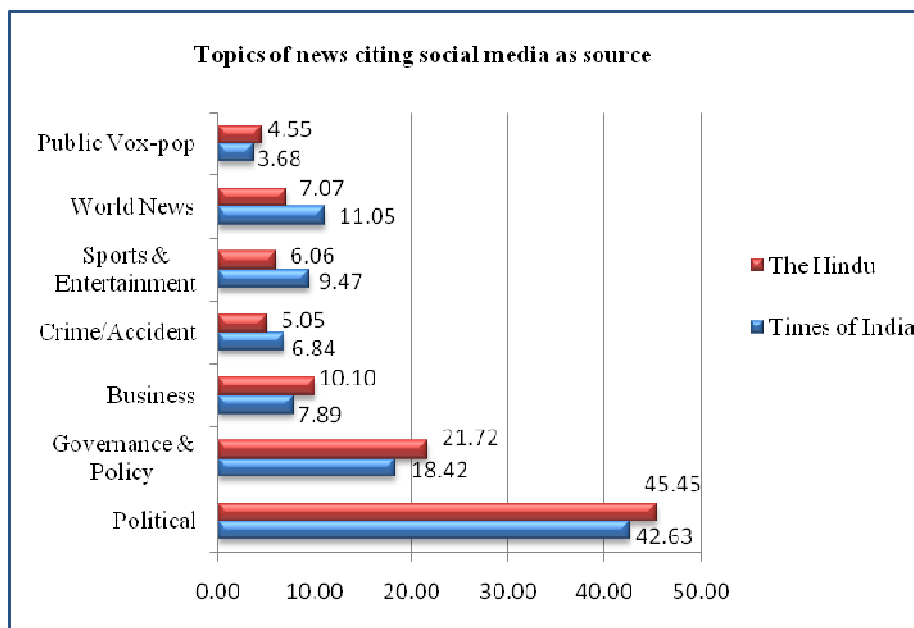
**Chart 3: Usage of Social Media Sources in Newspapers**

The Chart-3 is suggesting that both the newspapers are using social media sources with other various sources rather than using as standalone sources. In both the newspapers, there is a big difference between using social media as a standalone source and using social media as one among various sources. However, there is not a very big difference between both the newspapers' citation pattern of social media sources as standalone and one among various sources.

Chart-2 and Chart-3 are together giving the answer of research question-2 (RQ2) i.e. about the citation pattern of the social media sources in both the newspapers. After analyzing both the charts, we can say that there is not a very huge difference in the citation patterns of both the newspapers.



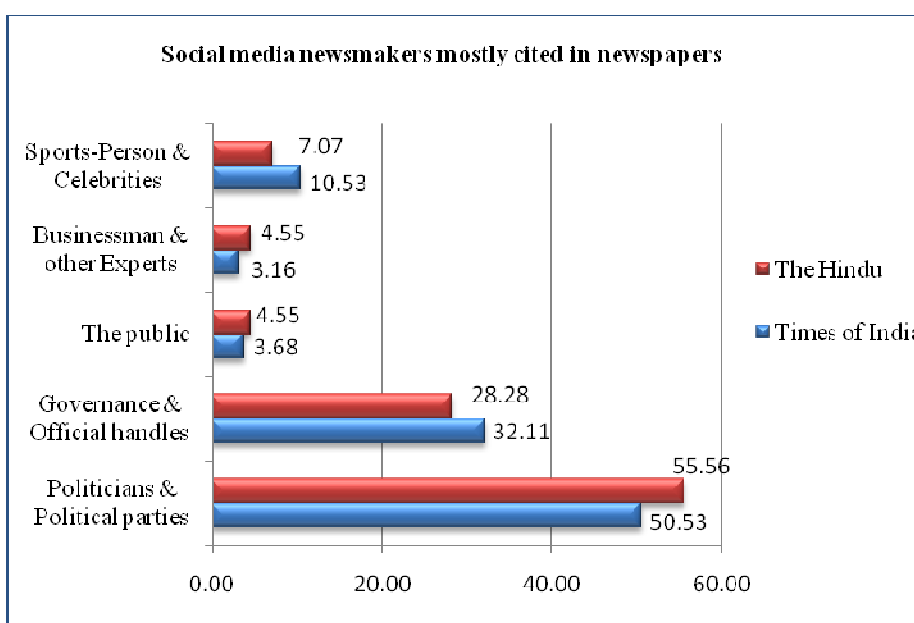
**Chart 4: Topics of the News Citing Social Media as Sources**



**Chart 4: Topics of News Citing Social Media as News Source**

The Chart- 4 is displaying that social media sources having political news are mostly cited by both the newspapers followed by ‘Governance & Policy’ news; and hence the third research question (RQ3) is answered. Both the newspapers are getting informations from social media and are citing those sources while writing stories. Social media sources are now being cited in almost all the beats as the above chart is showing.

**Chart 5: Social Media Sources Mostly Cited in Newspapers**

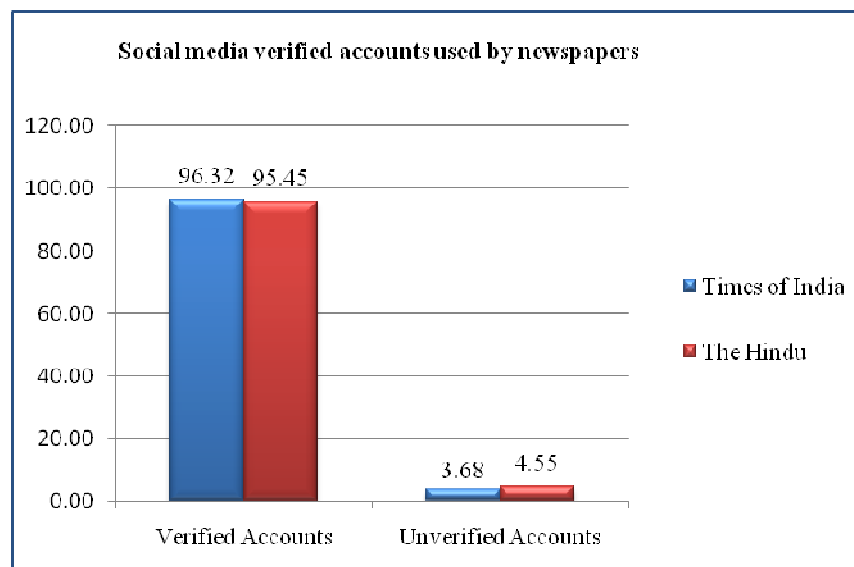


**Chart 5: Social Media Newsmakers Mostly Cited in Newspapers**

As displayed in previous Chart-4, newspapers are mostly citing social media sources in political news; obviously the most cited social media sources are ‘politicians & political parties’ as the above chart-5 is displaying (Answer of RQ4). Then ‘Governance & Official handles’ and ‘Sports Person & Celebrities’ sources are being most cited respectively. ‘Businessman & other Experts’ and ‘The Public’ are the lowest cited social media sources in the newspapers. The Hindu is citing the ‘politicians/political parties’ sources more than Times of India with the difference of 5%.

#### Chart 6: Social Media Verified Accounts used by Newspapers

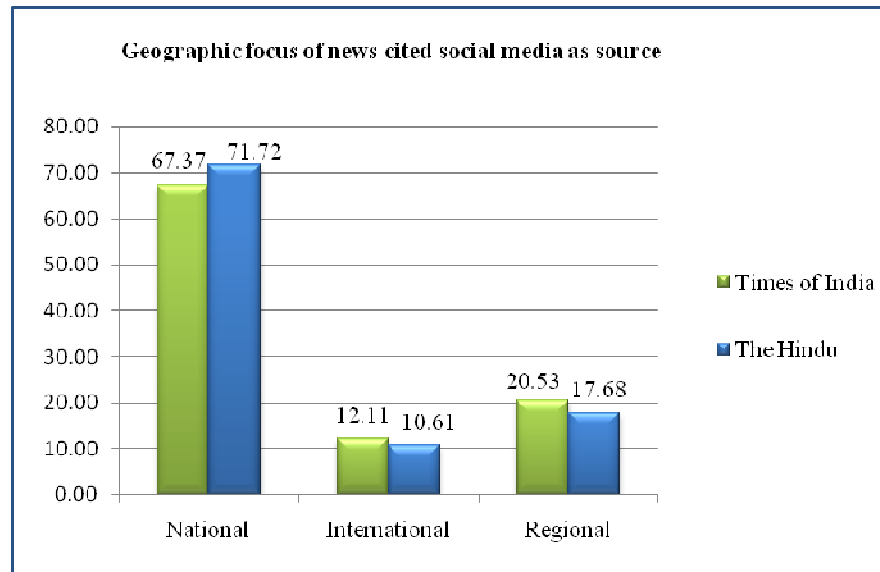
An important point is noticed during data collection is that newspapers are citing only those social media sources which are having verified accounts. A verified account has a blue check badge allotted by the social media services to mark the authentication of that account. All the social media sources used in both the newspapers whether politicians & political parties accounts, governance & official accounts, celebrities accounts and experts accounts, are verified accounts. Only the Public Vox-pop, included as social media sources in newspapers, are not verified accounts.



**Chart 6: Social Media Verified Accounts Used by Newspapers**

The difference between the use of verified accounts and unverified accounts can be clearly seen in the Chart-6. Out of 776 stories, 95.88% stories' sources are from verified accounts while 4.12% stories' sources are from unverified accounts. Mainstream media trust on the information posted by verified accounts, so they are directly quoting or paraphrasing the social media content in their news stories (RQ5).

**Chart 7: Geographic Focus of the News Cited Social Media Sources**



**Chart 7: Geographic Focus of News Cited Social Media as a Source**

Chart-7 answers the 6<sup>th</sup> research question (RQ6). The above chart shows that both newspapers are using social media sources more in national issues followed by regional issues and then international issues.

### Hypotheses Testing

In this study, IBM SPSS statistics 16.0 software is used for statistical data analysis. All the hypotheses of this study are tested using this software to measure the significance value at the .05 level.

- **H<sub>01</sub>: Times of India and the Hindu do not significantly differ in their citation of social media as primary and secondary sources.**

**Table 4: Chi-Square Tests for H<sub>01</sub>**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.344 <sup>a</sup>	1	.126		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	2.128	1	.145		
Likelihood Ratio	2.345	1	.126		
Fisher's Exact Test				.130	.072
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.341	1	.126		
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	776				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 171.39.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

**Interpretation:** It is clear from the chi-square test that the null hypothesis is accepted ( $X^2 = 2.344$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.126 > .05$ ) i.e. two newspapers do not significantly differ in their social media citation as primary and secondary sources. In other words, it can be said that the two newspapers are statistically equally citing social media sources as primary and secondary sources.

- **H<sub>02</sub>: Times of India and the Hindu do not significantly differ in their usage of social media as ‘standalone’ and ‘one among various’ sources.**

**Table 5: Chi-Square Tests for H<sub>02</sub>**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.243 <sup>a</sup>	1	.134		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	2.030	1	.154		
Likelihood Ratio	2.244	1	.134		
Fisher's Exact Test				.144	.077
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.240	1	.134		
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	776				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 153.76.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

**Interpretation:** It is clear from the chi-square test that the null hypothesis is accepted ( $X^2 = 2.243$ , p-value =  $0.134 > .05$ ) i.e. two newspapers do not significantly differ in their social media usage as standalone and one among various sources. In other words, it can be said that the two newspapers are statistically equally using social media sources as standalone and one among various sources.

- **H<sub>03</sub>: Times of India and the Hindu do not significantly differ in the citation of stories from social media verified accounts and unverified accounts.**

**Table 6: Chi-Square Tests for H<sub>03</sub>**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	.364 <sup>a</sup>	1	.546		
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	.179	1	.673		
Likelihood Ratio	.365	1	.546		
Fisher's Exact Test				.591	.337
Linear-by-Linear Association	.363	1	.547		
N of Valid Cases <sup>b</sup>	776				

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.67.

b. Computed only for a 2x2 table

**Interpretation:** It is clear from the chi-square test that the null hypothesis is accepted ( $X^2=0.364$ , p-value= $0.546 > .05$ ) i.e. Times of India and The Hindu do not significantly differ in the citation of stories from social media verified accounts and unverified accounts.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study first time provides an initial insight into how social media are used as a news source in Indian newspapers. The study findings show that Social media is being frequently cited as news sources in the newspapers' coverage. Both the newspapers, The Times of India and The Hindu, are using social media sources in almost all the beats. Overall, The Hindu is more using the social media sources than The Times of India within the same time period.

Twitter is the most cited social media platform among Indian newspapers and they are not hesitating to use it as 'primary' and 'Secondary' sources. Although, both the newspapers are citing social media sources more as secondary sources rather than primary sources. In the same way, both the newspapers are more citing social media sources with the support of other various sources as compared of using as standalone sources.

This study reveals that Politicians are the main newsmakers for the social media sources and obviously social media sources are more cited in political news. The mainstream media keeps an eye on verified accounts of politicians and their parties to access the news as soon as posted. Mainstream media are directly quoting the social media content in the story because they trust on the information posted by the verified accounts. The Indian newspapers are using more social media sources in national issues, regional issues and then international issues respectively.

This research has used a small set of sample. The small sample poses a limitation itself in drawing conclusions about the usage of social media as a news source in mainstream media. A long time-period can be taken for analysing newspapers' stories to get a perfect scenario about the trends of using social media sources in Indian newspapers. Further research can be done by including the data from broadcast media as well to draw conclusions in a broader sense.

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